

Ravalli County Environmental Health
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November 7, 2007

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Water Activities Working Group
c/o Rob Rung, Grants Officer
Water Quality Planning Bureau, DEQ
1520 E. Sixth Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Dear WAWG,

We wholeheartedly support the Hamilton Source Water Protection Project currently being considered by your group for funding. The project directly addresses the crucial need to protect ground water in Ravalli County and actively seeks solutions on a variety of fronts.

In particular, it promotes a working relationship among county and city governments, schools, private businesses and citizens to protect the county's precious aquifer through direct action and education. Such collaboration comes at an opportune time in our county and has our blessing as county commissioners.

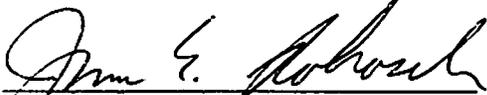
Updating and implementing Hamilton's Source Water Protection Plan may help provide us with justification to identify the Hamilton source water area as a "special management area," with protections more stringent than currently allowed. We welcome this action because it could serve as a template to delineate other environmentally sensitive areas of the county for special protection.

Creating and overseeing a much-needed countywide hazardous waste collection event would also address a critical need in our county by eliminating many potentially dangerous chemicals, thereby keeping them out of our ground water. Currently, such an important event is beyond what our cash-strapped county can afford, but it is something we desperately need.

Educating the public about water quality issues will also help us gather citizen support for a local water quality district. The fact that a resolution to establish such a district was defeated at the polls last June in Ravalli County illustrates the need to get the public behind this issue.

Please consider funding this project in its entirety. It will truly benefit our county, and our Environmental Health Department has both the staff and the community support to see that it's implemented.

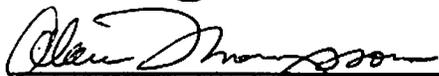
Sincerely,



James E. Rokosch, Chairman



Carlotta Grandstaff, Vice-Chairman



Alan Thompson, Member



Greg Chilcott, Member



Kathleen Driscoll, Member